



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

ICE DEPORTS 128 PEOPLE ON SPECIAL FLIGHTS TO PAKISTAN AND DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Many on The Flights Have Criminal Convictions

BUFFALO, N.Y. -- U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) announced today the removal of 128 people to Pakistan, the Dominican Republic, Mexico and El Salvador in two separate flights from Buffalo area airports. The Buffalo Office of Detention and Removal Operations conducted the operations.

The flight to Pakistan left Niagara Falls International Airport at noon on Tuesday and landed in Islamabad about 8:00 a.m. this morning Eastern Standard Time. The flight included 79 Pakistani nationals including 20 criminals and 59 individuals deported for immigration violations.

The criminals on the flights included people convicted of drug possession and trafficking crimes, sex offenses, robbery, perjury, counterfeiting, forgery and assault.

The flight to the Dominican Republic, Mexico and El Salvador left from the Buffalo International Airport and included 49 criminals with convictions including homicide, sexual assault, weapons violations, robbery, assault and various drug related convictions, including trafficking. The flight included 34 being deported to the Dominican Republic, 10 to Mexico and 5 to El Salvador.

Three of the individuals removed to El Salvador were known members of MS-13, a violent street gang which is one of the targets of Operation Community Shield, a ICE initiative to dismantling gangs. Community Shield attacks gangs by targeting their members, seizing financial assets, disrupting criminal operations, and removing gang members back to their native countries. The vast majority of individuals on the flight to Caribbean and Central America came from New York State prisons. The individuals came into ICE custody after they served their criminal sentence.

Also on the flight is a Dominican National, Ramone Tapia-Vasquez, who was convicted in New York of three counts of attempted murder, two counts of weapons possession, robbery and assault. The convictions resulted

from a botched robbery attempt in which the individual fire multiple gunshots at New York City police officers attempting to arrest him. Although no officers were hit during the robbery attempt two innocent bystanders were wounded by gunfire from Tapia Vasquez.

Charles Mule', Acting Field Office Director of the Buffalo office said, "Removing criminals from the United State's helps protect our neighborhoods from people who prey on the innocent and have no respect for the nations laws. Removing individuals who have violated immigrations law is necessary to protect the integrity of the immigration system."

Mule' pointed out that removing 128 individuals in two days is a significant accomplishment for the men and women of the Buffalo Office of Detention and Removal Operations.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.